

WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD NORTH COAST REGION

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

April and May 2002

WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION

Russian River Summer Sampling

[Staff Contact: John Short]

Every week from Memorial Day through Labor Day, Regional Water Board staff collect water quality data at five popular summer beaches along the Russian River. Staff monitors river water quality both to protect the health of the river and the health of the people who swim at these beaches. Samples are typically tested for turbidity, dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, conductivity, and bacterial content. Historical bacterial water quality data, the characteristic of interest for the purposes of public health, has been recently made available on the Regional Water Board web site. Bacteria results can be compared to Basin Plan standards as well as recommended standards for recreational contact. Staff expects to collect samples every Tuesday and post the results the following Thursday during the 2002 summer sampling season.



[Regional Water Board staff member Lauren Hocker sampling along the Russian River.]

The first of this years sampling was conducted on Tuesday, May 28. Staff member Cathy Goodwin orchestrated a training event for seven interns who will be collecting data this season. The training included

instruction on the use of field equipment, the proper technique for sampling as well as a review of proper health and safety protocol. While the interns were trained, Ms. Goodwin collected the official samples. The results have been posted on the Regional Water Board web site and show that all sampling locations were within the Department of Health Services' recommended guidelines for public contact.

Sonoma County Superior Court Ruling in the Case of Kenneth C. Wilson for violations of the California Water Code

[Staff Contact: William Winchester]

Kenneth C. Wilson, a Healdsburg vineyard developer, was found guilty of violating the California Water Code by the Sonoma County Superior Court. The misdemeanor charges were filed in response to a new vineyard that discharged sediment into Pine Creek, a tributary to Dry Creek and the Russian River. Andrew Baker and Scott Gergus, Associate Engineering Geologists with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game, provided documentation and testimony to Sonoma County District Attorney, Jeffrey Holtzman for prosecution.



[A view of the hillside vineyard showing ground disturbance and erosion that resulted in discharge of sediment into Pine Creek, a tributary to Dry Creek and the Russian River.]

On June 6, 2002 Mr. Wilson was sentenced to six months in jail; fined \$25,000; ordered to reimburse the Water Quality Control Board \$19,000 for staff costs; received 36 months probation; and ordered to submit a list of all residential, vineyard, and forestry properties. In 1998, Mr. Wilson paid a \$50,000 fine to the Water Quality Control Board for discharging sediment into House Creek, tributary to the Gualala River from a vineyard development project.



[Suspended sediment is clearly evident in this picture of Pine Creek.]

TIMBER HARVEST DIVISION

Freshwater Creek and Elk River TMDL Development Update

[Staff Contact: Holly Lundborg]

Regional Water Board staff held two public workshops to introduce Elk River and Freshwater Creek landowners and other interested stakeholders to the TMDL development process. The Elk River meeting was held the evening of May 28, 2002 at the Agricultural Extension Service Building in Eureka. The Freshwater Creek workshop was held the evening of May 29, 2002 at the Freshwater Grange Hall. Approximately thirty people were in attendance both evenings, with perspectives ranging from landowner responsibility, responsible agency interaction, environmental protection, industry and the media.



[Participants in one of the Elk River and Freshwater Creek Workshops.]

A brief overview at the TMDL development process was presented to the participants at the beginning at the workshop. The majority of the evening was dedicated to soliciting comments and answering questions from the public. Many interesting questions and comments were received during the workshop. This interaction will be documented in the workshop minutes and will be available for distribution to all interested parties. The next series of workshops is planned for late July 2002.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DIVISION

TMDL Unit Monitoring in the Klamath River Basin

[Staff Contact: Caryn Woodhouse]

This summer the TMDL unit will be monitoring water quality on the Klamath, Shasta, Salmon, and Lost Rivers. These rivers are on the State's 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies. The Klamath River is listed as impaired for high water temperature, low dissolved oxygen and excess nutrients; the Shasta River is listed for temperature and dissolved oxygen; the Salmon is listed for temperature and nutrients; and, the Lost River (including Clear Lake Reservoir, Tule Lake and Lower Klamath Lake) is listed for high water temperature and excess nutrients.



[Photo of TMDL sampling site on Willow Creek at the Great Society Bridge in Modoc County – May 2002.]

The Region's TMDL staff started monitoring five sites in the Upper Lost River and Clear Lake Basin located along the Oregon border in Modoc County, in May 2002. TMDL staff will monitor five sites on the Salmon River starting in June 2002. Under contract to the Regional Water Board, the USGS will monitor seven sites on the Klamath River from the Oregon border to the mouth, three sites on the Shasta River and two sites on the Lower Lost River and Tule Lake. USGS is expected to begin monitoring in June 2002. The Regional Water Board will coordinate the summer sampling with Oregon's planned intensive Klamath and Lost River sampling in August. The data obtained in these sampling efforts will be used in TMDL development. TMDLs for the Upper Lost River/Clear Lake area and the Salmon River are due in 2003; for the Lower Lost River/Tule Lake area in 2004; for the Shasta River in 2004; and, for the Klamath mainstem in 2005.

Mattole Sediment and Temperature TMDLs

[Staff Contact: David Leland]

In early May, Regional Water Board staff participated in two presentations and community forums on the Mattole TMDLs. The meetings were held in Petrolia and Whitethorn. Staff discussed the TMDL process, framework, and approaches to the work in progress. Staff have been gathering data in the field on small sediment sources, while the UC Davis Information Center for the Environment has been analyzing current and historical aerial photos to identify landslides and unstable areas. Staff are also developing models of temperature conditions in selected subwatersheds and stream reaches for use in the temperature TMDL. We are scheduled to have a draft TMDL and supporting technical documents available for public review in September of this year.

CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDERS

There were two Cleanup and Abatement Orders adopted during the month of April 2002 and three Cleanup and Abatement Orders during the month of May 2002.

Cleanup and Abatement Orders were issued to: Craig Waste Oil Spill; Lolonis Vineyard; Canevari Timber Company, Figas Construction Company; and, Shell, Albion.

CALIFORNIA WATER CODE SECTION 13267 LETTER ORDERS

There were four California Water Code section 13267(b) Letter Orders issued during the month of April 2002. Letters were sent to: Anchor Bay Station; G & R Metals; Salvation Army Lytton Springs; Semmelmeier, Herb; Carter Properties; Carter Properties Too; Judy's Market; and Mobil Montecito.

SPILLS, COMPLAINTS, AND INVESTIGATIONS

Twenty-one complaints were received during the months of April and May 2002.

ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINTS/ORDERS

Two Administrative Civil Liability Complaints were issued, and one Mandatory Minimum Penalty Complaint was issued.

Fairhaven Power Plant was issued an Administrative Civil Liability Complaint for storage of fly ash in an uncontrolled area. This is a violation of their Waste Discharge Requirements and could result in an unpermitted discharge.

The City of Santa Rosa's Wastewater Treatment Pond facility was issued an Administrative Civil Liability Complaint for various violations during the time of April

2000 through June 2001. The discharger waived the right to a public hearing and paid the penalty.

The City of Santa Rosa's Wastewater Treatment Pond facility was also issued a Complaint for Mandatory Minimum Penalties for violations for the period between July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001. The discharger waived the right to a public hearing and paid the penalty.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CLEANUP FUND PROGRAM

For the month of April 2002 , there has been a total of \$1,668,241 in funds issued to tank owners in Region 1 from the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund. There were no letters of commitment issued during the month of April 2002.

For the month of May 2002 , there has been a total of \$1,696,530.00 in funds issued to tank owners in Region 1 from the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund. There were 9 letters of commitment issued during the month of May 2002 for a total commitment of 125,000 for the month.

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATIONS

Eleven new applications for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification were received in April and May 2002. Eleven 401 Certifications were issued in April and May 2002.

Information regarding all proposed certifications is available at our Internet web site at:

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb1/Public_Notices/401certs/notice401.html

PUBLIC FILE REVIEW

From April 1 through May 31, 2002, eight written requests were made for review of the Regional Water Board's records. These files were made available pursuant to the California Public Records Act. In addition, a total of 26 people came into the office and requested file review during the month of April 2002 and 36 people during the month of May 2002.

STAFF HIRING

There were two hires during the month of April 2002. Carey Wilder, an Engineering Geologist who transferred from the Los Angeles Regional Water Board (Region 4), is working in the TMDL Unit that is part of the Regional Watershed Management Division. William Hobson, an Environmental Scientist, is also working in the TMDL Unit that is part of the Regional Watershed Management Division.

AUGUST WATER BOARD MEETINGS

The Regional Water Board meeting for August will be held in Eureka on August 22, 2002.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web-site at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>.